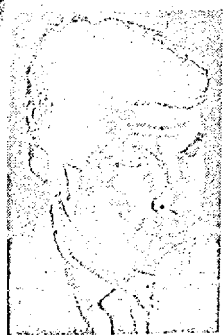


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'Topaz' Aftermath

French Purge Spy Network

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The spectre that haunts any intelligence service is that the other side might "penetrate" it and make all that vital secret stuff not only meaningless, but even give the other side an advantage.

According to authors of "The Philby Affair," the definitive book on Soviet super-spy Kim Philby, there was a reluctance inside British intelligence to acknowledge Philby's treason because to do so would mean that the life work of many honorable men was "absolutely meaningless."

One of the valid apprehensions about the "security" of the CIA today is that it was first organized at the end of World War II with the help of the British Intelligence Service — and Kim Philby. Who knows just what elements were infiltrated into the ground floor of the CIA?

After Philby's exposure, Britain's "Old Boy" secret service was shaken up and streamlined; periodically the U.S. State Department security is purged, although it is debatable whether it's been for the better.

West German intelligence has undergone several purges, as traitors and spies have been unmasked from time to time.

Now, with the suddenness of a lightning bolt, French security has been purged from top to bottom with a thoroughness that might even impress the Soviets — were they not the victims of the exercise.

The French have been known in friendly security circles as the "sieve of the West."

Their problems were exposed to public scrutiny three years ago when Col. Philippe de Vosjoli (once France's top intelligence man in North America) told of deep Soviet penetration into the policy-making structure of the French government.

His revelations were the basis of the novel and movie "Topaz."

EVEN SOVIET intelligence undergoes great "cleansings," especially after agents such as Col. Oleg Penkovsky were found working for the West in the heart of espionage headquarters. Every KGB (Soviet secret police) defector causes ripples and shake-ups inside Soviet intelligence.

For the past 10 years, the Western intelligence service with the "leak-ist" reputation has been French intelligence and security service — SDECE (Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionage) and DST (Direction de la Sécurité du Territoire).

DE VOSJOLI RESIGNED in 1963 after President de Gaulle ignored the warnings of a top-ranking KGB defector (code name Martel, or Dolnytsin) about a couple of Soviet spies in his Cabinet.

De Vosjoli had received orders from Paris to begin spying on the U.S. on behalf of Soviet intelligence, which dominated the command structure of SDECE. He refused, and resigned.

All this was under de Gaulle.

Finally, action has apparently been taken by President Pompidou who, reportedly, has been strongly influenced by two things:

First, Pompidou was apparently deeply disturbed by some of the things he saw during his recent visit to Russia.

Second, he is known to have read de Vosjoli's new book, *Lamia*, which is one of the most explosive espionage books ever written, and which gives names, dates and methods used by certain elements inside French intelligence.

It is an extraordinary document that rings with authenticity, and has become "must" reading for allied intelligence services.

CURIOUSLY, it has had only limited circulation and cannot easily be

try that has dared to print it so far. It cannot be purchased in Canada or Britain.

Pompidou's purge has given added veracity to de Vosjoli's memoirs — so much so, that the hitherto silent (and strictly controlled) French press has suddenly started asking questions.

The irascible and cheeky newspaper *Le Canard* has examined the intelligence purge and has challenged those individuals named by de Vosjoli to "strike back" and to go to the U.S. and sue.

So far there's been nothing but a resounding silence from those implicated by de Vosjoli in his book — names such as Defence Minister (then Prime Minister) Michel Debre, whom de Vosjoli says ordered political assassination by special murder squads called "Red Hand."

He also named Jacques Foccart, chief of intelligence, and Louis Joxe, a key de Gaulle minister and former ambassador to Moscow, as being suspect Soviet spies.

The new director general of SDECE is Alexandre de Marenches, a wealthy, aristocratic French patriot with no former connections with intelligence. He is highly regarded in the West, friendly with NATO, aware of Sovietism, and above suspicion.

AMONG THE FIRST to be purged was Col. Beaumont, chief of the department that gathers "raw" intelligence and a man who had been touted to be head of the whole service. He was summarily retired — without official reason. His successor is Faure Beaulieu.

Also purged was the head of counter-espionage — Col. Jacques Herve, who once directed the French network in Quebec. He was ordered back to France without explanation. His successor is reportedly Ferret Patin, who is less "political."